



IN THE NEWS

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HQDA Transfers Brazil-US Staff Talks to USARSO

By Stuart G.R. Warner

Supporting the recent guidance from SOUTHCOM to focus on improving or enhancing the Army-to-Army relationship with the Brazilian Army, USARSO was officially named US Army Action Agent for the Brazil-US Staff Talks on 1 October 2004. For the past 20 years TRADOC organized annual Bilateral Army Staff Talks between the US and the Brazilian Armies on behalf of the Chief of Staff of the Army. Traditionally, Staff Talks with Brazil remained focused on DOTML-PF domains (Doctrine, Organizations, Training, Materiel, Leadership Development, Personnel, and Facilities). The close relationship that has been forged with Brazil during the twenty years of the Brazil-US Staff Talks, has resulted in improved bilateral Army-to-Army engagements. In addition to continued standardization of doctrine, logistics and materiel training, the Staff Talks facilitated relationship-building which may have influenced Brazil's decision to play a vital peacekeeping (PKO) role in Military Observer Mission, Ecuador-Peru, and more recently Brazil's decision to provide lead support in PKO Haiti.

By accepting regional leadership roles that complement US missions in the AOR, Brazil supports US Army efficiencies, enabling the US to utilize Army assets elsewhere as needed. The USARSO Office of Regional



HQDA Transfers Brazil-US Staff Talks to USARSO

Affairs, Political Military Division, recently assumed the leadership role as the USARSO Army Action Agent for the bilateral Army-to-Army Staff Talks program in the AOR. As the new Program Manager of the Brazil-US Staff Talks, Mr. Stuart Warner said "The purpose of the Brazil-U.S. Staff Talks is to enhance the potential for combined force effectiveness through greater bilateral understanding," and "A further goal is to strengthen the alliance between the Brazilian and U.S. Armies, to develop a professional partnership between the Armies and to ultimately promote compatibility through meaningful, professional Army-to-Army level exchanges and initiatives."

During the upcoming Staff Talks, USARSO will meet with the Brazilian Army to deliver presentations about specific themes of significant interest and each Army will be invited to

discuss potential collaborations in areas of mutual interest. LTC Axel Martinez, Political Military Division Chief, G-5, adds that "By working together, the Brazilian Army and the US Army can identify areas where each other can provide information about their organizations, management and centers of excellence which, in turn, can facilitate dialogue, supporting the goal of leveraging Brazilian resources and technological expertise in areas that will benefit Army Transformation efforts." Brazil has possibly the most advanced technical base in South America and the Staff Talks could serve to identify mutual interests. In addition to developing Subject Matter Expert Exchanges between the Armies, USARSO will utilize the Staff Talks to identify future issues that will reflect the bilateral environment, tailoring the full-spectrum support of military

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operations to the Brazilian and US Armies. During the recent Steering Committee meeting in Brasilia, COL Richard B. Driver, Deputy Chief of Staff Office of Regional Affairs, G-5, presented a new concept for the future development of Staff Talk topics. He introduced a proposal to identify cyclical, biennial topics, so that common denominators can link all of the presentations and exchanges, within each cycle. COL Driver said that "By developing common cycle topics, designed to fulfill the professional needs of each country, each cycle topic will compliment and build upon the successive cycle topic." He added that "Upon the conclusion of the 2-year cycles, an assessment of the progress could be determined, providing a vehicle to improve the program." During the recent Steering Committee meeting, all delegates agreed to the theme for the upcoming XXI Staff Talks: "The Operational Role and Doctrine of our Armies in the 21st Century as it relates to Combined Arms and Joint Operations." When both Armies reconvene in 2005, the presentations and exchanges will support this theme. On behalf of the Army, USARSO is a proud participant of the Staff Talks program and the G-5, in particular, is keenly interested in strengthening the alliances with the Armies in the Latin American region through the Staff Talks program. Based on the positive return that we have experienced, the value of these Staff Talks is significant and we welcome the opportunity by accepting the responsibility/lead of the existing Brazil-US Staff Talks as Executive Agent of this valued program.

Travel Insurance 101

When things go wrong, it is good to know in advance what your options are.

For US Military on Active Duty TRICARE has an ongoing contract with International SOS (Toll free 1-800-834-5514 or Collect 215-701-2800) that will provide 24/7 a bilingual Nurse to assist you in finding a recommended provider or hospital, negotiate payment with the provider or institution, and arrange for medical evacuation back to the States if necessary. You should not have to pay a cent out of pocket. Active Duty Family Members are also covered under this program, if your spouse wants to lounge on the beach while you are in conference.

Retirees - TRICARE will reimburse you, but the International SOS contract with TRICARE does NOT cover you. I'll go over your options below.

GS, Reservists NOT on AD, and Contract Personnel. You are on your own, even if you are a Military Retiree. See above.

If not covered by the TRICARE

contract with International SOS I highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. International SOS sells individual policies and has a good track record in our AOR. For a 17 day trip they will provide full coverage for \$80. If you are a frequent traveler, a one year subscription is \$245. You can claim it as a business expense on your taxes. Another company I did an Internet search on is called Legend Travelers. I did a quote for a 17 day trip for myself, age 50-59, and it was \$72, \$250 deductible, max \$1,000,000 coverage. I am not selling insurance for any one company, but I AM selling the idea.

Websites for the two I mentioned are: www.Internationalsos.com and www.legendtravelers.com

I'm sure if you do a Google search you could find others, but these two can give you a pretty good idea of what is available.

Happy travelling!

Bradley Harper

COL MC

Command Surgeon

DCS-G8

Since the last newsletter submission, The G8 has undergone a number of changes. The Defense Travel System (DTS) is now fully implemented in USARSO for CONUS and OCONUS travel, but not without some challenges. We continue to fund a few hard-copy travel orders under special circumstances, but we are processing about 85% of the travel orders through DTS. We understand there are some challenges, but bear with us and the bugs will eventually get worked out.

We have had 4 personnel with USARSO under the HQDA Intern Program for a little over a year now. They continue to train in the CP-11 career field, striving for the Multi-Functional Budget Analyst designator. They've got about 9 months left on the program until "graduation". Alexandra Ortiz and Javier Vazquez will rotate out of G8 for a 90-day term with Command Audit. Jacquelyn McCormick and Mike Messenger will rotate to Washington, DC

to work a 90-day rotation with the US Army Corps of Engineers Audit Section under the tutelage once again of Mr. Don Ripp (yes, the previous Director of USARSO Command Audit Office).

We have one departure coming up. Yvette Barker who works in the Programming Section has accepted a position in Alaska, (her dream job, according to her) right back to where she came from. She's done a lot of fantastic work here over the past year and we'll miss her. The entire G8 wishes her and her family the best of luck.

Ivette Almenas has been in Colombia for the past 4 months assisting the Contracting office for the MILGRP. She's finally coming back to San Antonio. We've missed her in the office and welcome her back.

Also new is Cindy Farley, joining us in mid-January, and is filling a vacancy in the Consolidated Budget Branch. Welcome Cindy.

USARSO SPOUSES' CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February/March 2005

- 9 February USARSO Social Coffee for all spouses and employees of USARSO
Where: Home of Celeste Raymond
103 Artillery Post Road, FSH
Time: 6:30pm
RSVP: Celeste at 222-0014
Please bring a dish to share.
- 11 February USARSO Hail and Farewell
Hosted by G4
Theme: Carnival
Where: Sam Houston Club (NCO club)
Time: 1500
Cost: \$8.00 Tickets available at G4
Dress: Casual / Duty Uniform
POC: Mabel Avila at 295-6370
Erika Holmes at 295-6238
CPT Elrod at 295-6727
- 15 February OCSC Luncheon
Where: Sam Houston Club (NCO club)
Time: 11:00am
RSVP: Sigrid Reitstetter at 226-8806 by Friday, February 11.
- 16 February DEADLINE for DECA/Fisher House Scholarships for Military Children 2005
Applicants must be unmarried children under the age of 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of Active Duty personnel, Reserve, Guard, and retired military
Visit www.militaryscholar.org or www.commissaries.com for details.
- 17 February USARSO Baked Goods Contribution for SFAC/Fisher House
Five volunteers needed to bake or purchase snacks of cookies, cake, etc.
POC: Betsy Meyer at 299-4073 or eimeyer523@yahoo.com
- 25-26 February FSH Annual "It's Not Easy Being Green" Conference
Where: Dodd Field Chapel
Child Care is provided but limited so register early.
Registration is due by February 11. Forms are available at ACS, FSH Library, Sam Houston Club, BAMC Medical Mall information desk, OCSC luncheon, Jimmy Brought Fitness Center and FSH Child and Youth Services Center.
POC: Judith Markelz at 655-0238
Kim Taylor at 566-6526

IN AND AROUND TEXAS

February/March 2005

*visit www.traveltex.com or call 1-800-452-9292 for more details **Mardi Gras Galveston 2005**

Date: Jan 28-Feb8

City: Galveston

For 12 days and 11 nights the island is electrified by the sounds of live music, spectacular parades, elaborate masked balls and flamboyant costumes. This year's theme is Red,

White and Blue. Strand Historic

District. E-mail:

info@galvestoncvb.com

Mardi Gras Weekend/Jesters Treasures

Date: Feb 3-6

City: Port Arthur

Festivities include parades, concerts, street entertainment, arts & crafts, carnival rides, fireworks, street vendors, rock climbing and more. Downtown Port Arthur.

Mardi Gras Upriver

Date: Feb 4-6

City: Jefferson

Features a Doo Dah Parade, grand parade, children's parade, floats, beads, live music, arts & crafts, food vendors, costumes and more.

Downtown. E-mail:

sonchamber@msn.com

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Jazz Festival

Date: Feb 4-6, 11-13

City: [Wimberley](#)

Features famous and soon-to-be-famous jazz musicians from surrounding areas. Cypress Creek Cafe. E-mail: bcwimbo@aol.com

Carnaval Brasileiro

Date: Feb 5

City: [Austin](#)

Features flamboyant costumes, Brazilian samba music and the uninhibited atmosphere. Palmer Events Center.

Tails of SPI Kite Festival

Date: Feb 5-6

City: [South Padre Island](#)

On the "flats" north of the Convention Centre.

Yachty Gras Night Boat Parade

Date: Feb 5

Boaters cruise the Kemah Channel in lavishly decorated boats and toss beads to Mardi Gras enthusiasts. Kemah Boardwalk and Seabrook Restaurants.

Mardi Gras: Bourbon Street on the Brazos

Date: Feb 5

A parade down Possum Kingdom's own Bourbon Street signals the start of Mardi Gras — Possum Kingdom-style. Enjoy a shrimp boil with all of the trimmings, Cajun dance music and best costume awards. Possum Kingdom Chamber of Commerce Building. E-mail: pkchamber@possumkingdomlake.com

Fat Tuesday Mardi Gras Party

Date: Feb 8

City: [Port Arthur](#)

The final event of Mardi Gras includes the presentation of the royal court, food, music and dancing. Bob Bowers Civic Center.

Mardi Gras on Main

Date: Feb 8

City: [Kerrville](#)

Includes wine tasting, award winning artwork and more.

Wine Lovers Trail

Date: Feb 11-13, 18-20

City: [Johnson City](#)

Texas Hills Vineyard.

Market Days

Date: Feb 12-13

City: [Boerne](#)

Features food, antiques, crafts and music. Main Plaza.

Coastal Bend Quilt & Needlework Eighth Bi-Annual Quilt Show

Date: Feb 12-13

City: [Corpus Christi](#)

Features more than 300 entries of quilts, wearable arts and needlework. Includes demonstrations of various techniques, vendors from around the country, kids corner and a free workshop about quilt blocks for charity quilts. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. American Bank Center, 1901 N. Shoreline Blvd. E-mail: shirleyg@stx.rr.com

18th Annual Asian Festival

Date: Feb 12

City: [San Antonio](#)

Celebrate the Year of the Rooster with the Asian community of South Texas. Includes martial arts demonstrations, ethnic dance presentations, mouth-watering entrees and more. Institute of Texan Cultures, 801 S. Bowie.

Hot-to-Trot Chili Cook-Off

Date: Feb 18-19

City: [Nacogdoches](#) Features an annual CASI-sanctioned chili cook-off.

Includes the Piney Woods Lawn Mower Races. Benefits the Nacogdoches Historical Foundation and the Heritage Festival. Nacogdoches Expo Center.

Trade Days

Date: Feb 18-20

City: [Fredericksburg](#)

More than 300 vendors sell antiques, collectibles, tools, primitives, shabby chic, ranch furniture, crafts, unique clothing and jewelry, food vendors and more. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Friday and Saturday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Hwy. 290 across from Wildseed Farms.

St. Valentine's Day Motorcycle Massacre

Date: Feb 18-20

City: [Boerne](#)

Kendall County Fairgrounds.

Mardi Gras Arts & Crafts Fair

Date: Feb 18-20

City: [San Antonio](#)

River Walk.

Rotary Club Shrimp Boil

Date: Feb 19

City: [Port Aransas](#)

Proceeds benefit local youth activities and scholarships. Port Aransas Civic Center.

Old Gruene Market Days

Date: Feb 19-20

City: [Gruene](#)

Gruene Hall, 1281 Gruene Road.

Let's Rock 'n' Roll for Kids

Date: Feb 19

City: [New Braunfels](#)

Enjoy a '50s-style dinner and dance with Johnny Dee & the Rocket 88's. Hours are 8 p.m. to midnight. Come dressed in '50s attire. Wursthalle. E-mail: cis@cisnewbraunfels.org

Mardi Gras River Parade

Date: Feb 20

City: [San Antonio](#)

Begins at 2 p.m. River Walk.

Charro Days 2005

Date: Feb 20-27

City: [Brownsville](#)

Presents a colorful, twin-city celebration of folkloric dancing, mariachis, "merienda" and parades. International parade with numerous decorated floats begins in downtown Brownsville and proceeds across the bridge into Matamoros, Mexico. During the concurrent Sombrero Festival, fiesta-goers enjoy live concerts with popular and Tejano music, traditional food, dances and more. The Mr. Amigo Association selects a personality, who has the influence and good relationship

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between the two cultures, to become Mr. Amigo. E-mail:

charrodays@aol.com

The King's Orchard Strawberry Harvest

Date: Mar 1-May31

South by Southwest Conferences & Festivals

Date: Mar 11-20

City: Austin

Every March, thousands of participants from the music, film and Internet industries converge in Austin for ten days to participate in three distinct — yet related — festivals, conferences and trade shows. Since its debut in 1987, SXSW has evolved into a unique global event focused on the creative side of the entertainment business. Austin Convention Center, along with numerous theaters and music venues.

E-mail: sxsw@sxsw.com

Alamo Irish Festival

Date: Mar 11-13

City: San Antonio

Features food and beverage booths,

arts & crafts booths, Irish store, genealogy information and a special children's area. Arneson River Theater hosts dancing and singing with entertainment varying from Irish to country, jazz, rock and Tejano. La Villita and Arneson River Theater.

Tejano Music Awards Fanfair

Date: Mar 11-13

City: San Antonio

Celebrates Tejano music, its artists and the industry. Market Square. E-mail: jessemo@sanantonio.gov

St. Patrick's Day Street Parade

Date: Mar 12

City: San Antonio

Begins at Third Street and Avenue E at 2 p.m. and follows Alamo Street south to La Villita. Includes dignitaries, marching units, floats, clowns, antique cars and music.

Daffodil Day

Date: Mar 12

City: San Marcos

Dozens of blooming gardens capture

spectators' attention. Offers entertainment, music, silent auction and quilt display. Price Senior Center, 222 W. San Antonio St.

Market Day

Date: Mar 12, Apr9, May14

City: Georgetown

Enjoy arts & crafts, antiques, collectibles and festive foods from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Historic Downtown Georgetown.

St. Patrick's Day River Dyeing Parade

Date: Mar 13

City: San Antonio

Begins at 11:30 a.m. with a jazz band followed by an Irish band and dancers at the Arneson River Theater. At 1 p.m., barges wind down the San Antonio River. Bright green dye turns the water into the River Shannon for the day. The barges disembark at the Arneson River Theater where people can listen to bagpipes, proclamations, speeches, high school band and an Irish sing-along. Wildseed Farms.



LTC Jeffrey Eck, USARSO's former SGS sends greetings from his new home with luxury accommodations! Thanks for all your support LTC Eck, you are missed!

USARSO COMMUNITY NEWS PUBLICATION DATES

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March 5, 2005

April 1, 2005

Submit by date

Feb 25, 2005

21 March, 2005



Please submit information you would like to have included in the USARSO

Newsletter to

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